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Global road safety crisis

Improving global road safety

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General herby transmits the report on improving global road safety, prepared by the World Health Organization in consultation with the regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration.

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Report on improving global road safety, prepared by the World Health Organization in consultation with the regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

Summary

The present report, prepared by the World Health Organization in consultation with the regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, provides an update on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in General Assembly resolutions 58/289, 60/5 and 62/244 on improving global road safety. The report describes ongoing activities and a series of global road safety developments that have occurred over the past two years, indicating that collaborative advocacy efforts have had a significant impact. The growth in collaborative projects to implement road safety measures, alongside the great number of road safety actions that are being taken at the local, national and international levels, indicate an increasing recognition by Governments and other stakeholders that action to improve road safety is urgent. The report notes, however, that road traffic injuries continue to threaten health and development gains around the world. An ambitious road safety vision and commensurate funding are required to address the global crisis effectively. The report concludes with a number of recommendations for consideration by the Assembly, which would facilitate both international support for road safety and the implementation of effective interventions known to improve road safety at the national level.

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I. Introduction

1. Road traffic injuries remain a major public health problem and a leading cause of death, injury and disability around the world. Each year, nearly 1.3 million people die and between 20 million and 50 million more are injured as a result of road crashes. More than 90 per cent of these deaths occur in low-income and middle-income countries, which have less than half of the world's vehicles. Road traffic injuries are among the three leading causes of death for people between 5 and 44 years of age.

2. Road traffic injuries threaten to hinder achievements in economic and human development. It has been estimated that global losses due to road traffic injuries total $518 billion and cost Governments between 1 and 3 per cent of their gross national product. In some low- and middle-income countries, the loss is more than the total amount of development assistance they receive. Road traffic injuries place a heavy burden on a country's economy as a result of their direct impact on health-care and rehabilitation services, as well as through indirect costs. They also can put considerable financial stress on affected families, who often must absorb medical and rehabilitation costs, funeral costs and such other costs as the lost earnings of the victim, in addition to extensive emotional strain.

3. The economic, social and health losses resulting from road traffic injuries are not inevitable. There is substantial evidence confirming that road traffic injuries can be prevented. Experience from around the world has identified that the creation of an adequately funded lead agency on road safety and an accurate assessment of a country's road safety situation are important steps that need to be taken to effectively tackle road traffic injuries. A number of factors have been identified as increasing the risk of traffic-related injuries, including inappropriate and excess speed, non-use of seat belts and child restraints, drinking and driving, non-use of helmets by riders of motorized two-wheelers, poorly designed or insufficiently maintained road infrastructure and vehicles that are old, not well maintained or that lack safety features. Regulatory and other actions that address those risk factors have led to dramatic decreases in road crashes in many countries. The provision of emergency trauma care services has also been shown to be important in mitigating the negative impacts of road traffic crashes.

4. Over the past four or more decades, many regional and global road safety initiatives have been implemented. On World Health Day 2004, publication of the World Health Organization/World Bank *World Report On Road Traffic Injury Prevention* helped catalyse action. The report stresses the role of many sectors in the prevention of road traffic injuries and describes the fundamental concepts of road traffic injury prevention, the magnitude and impact of road traffic injuries, the major determinants and risk factors and effective intervention strategies. As such, it serves as both an advocacy tool and a technical document containing six major recommendations on what countries can do to address the problem of road traffic injuries.

5. Following publication of the *World Report* in April 2004, the United Nations adopted resolution 58/289, sponsored by Oman and entitled "Improving global road safety", which recognized the need for the United Nations system to support efforts to address the global road safety crisis. In the resolution, the General Assembly invited the World Health Organization (WHO), working in close cooperation with

the regional commissions, to act as a coordinator on road safety issues within the United Nations system. It also underlined the need for the further strengthening of international cooperation, taking into account the needs of developing countries, to deal with issues of road safety.

6. In May 2004, the World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA 57.10, in which it accepted the General Assembly invitation for WHO to act as the coordinator on road safety issues. In the resolution on road safety and health, Member States were also called upon to prioritize road safety as a public health issue and to take steps to implement measures known to be effective in reducing road traffic injuries.

7. In October 2005, the General Assembly adopted resolution 60/5, in which it underlined the importance for Member States to pay particular attention to road traffic injury prevention. In the resolution, the Assembly invited the regional commissions and WHO to organize jointly the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week and invited Member States and the international community, to recognize the third Sunday in November of every year as the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

8. On 31 March 2008, the General Assembly adopted resolution 62/244 entitled "Improving global road safety", the third major resolution on the issue, in which it reaffirmed the importance of addressing global road safety issues and the need to further strengthen international cooperation and knowledge-sharing in road safety and increase related financial support, taking into account the needs of developing countries. In the resolution, the Assembly also welcomed the offer by the Government of the Russian Federation to host the first global high-level (ministerial) conference on road safety in 2009. In the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-fourth session on progress made in improving global road safety.

9. Member States have taken a large number of measures to strengthen legislation improve data collection and develop national and local road safety strategies and programmes. These initiatives are too numerous to detail in the present report; however, some have been described in the recently released *Global Status Report On Road Safety* (see para. 37 below). The focus of the preset report is thus on international and regional road safety efforts.

II. United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

10. In accordance with the mandate conferred upon it by the General Assembly, WHO has worked closely over the past five years with the regional commissions to coordinate the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (hereafter referred to as the "Collaboration"), a group comprised of United Nations and international organizations committed to improving road safety. As of June 2009, the group comprised 12 organizations of the United Nations system, including WHO, the World Bank, the five regional commissions, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Approximately 50 other agencies working in international or regional road safety, with a broad range of skills and experience, are also represented. The number and range of sectors represented by

the participating organizations (Governments, non-governmental organizations, donors, research agencies and the private sector) from the transport, health and safety sectors attest to the broad support for this collaborative effort.

11. To date, the Collaboration has met biannually, a total of 10 times. Where possible, meetings each year alternate between WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, and the offices of a regional commission. Members of the Collaboration share the common vision that death and injury should not be the price of mobility. The goal of the Collaboration, developed through mutual consensus by participants, is to facilitate international cooperation and to strengthen global and regional coordination among United Nations agencies and other international partners to implement General Assembly resolutions 58/289, 60/5 and 62/244 and the recommendations contained in the *World Report On Road Traffic Injury Prevention*, and thereby support country programmes.

12. A number of objectives to meet the goal have also been identified, including supporting assessments of the road safety situation and the existing facilities of countries to address the problem; developing guidance and support for effective road safety interventions; disseminating good practices; providing capacity development on road safety issues; advocating and encouraging the demand for road safety; strengthening global and regional coordination on road safety; and improving the safety of United Nations fleets for all road users. These terms of reference for the Collaboration were endorsed at its 9th meeting held in November 2008 in Geneva.

III. Work of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

A. Technical support

13. The Collaboration, through a consortium of four partners (the FIA Foundation, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the World Bank and WHO), has continued to develop the series of manuals that provide guidance to countries on how to implement good practices in road safety as identified in the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*. In addition to the initial manuals *Helmets: a Road Safety Manual for Decision-Makers and Practitioners* (2006) and *Drinking and Driving: a Road Safety Manual for Decision-Makers and Practitioners* (2007), the Collaboration has published the third and fourth manuals in the series: *Speed Management: a Road Safety Manual for Decision-Makers and Practitioners* (2008) and *Seat-belts and Child Restraints: a Road Safety Manual for Decision-Makers and Practitioners* (2009).[1] A manual on data systems for road safety is in the final stages of development and is expected to be published by the end of 2009, as are products relating to fleet safety and safer road infrastructure.

14. Various members of the Collaboration are providing technical support to countries for the implementation of the good practice manuals. The manuals are being used strategically and practically to support targeted actions to reduce road crashes and serious injuries, particularly in low-income and middle-income countries, including Benin, Brazil, Cambodia, Indonesia, Mexico, the Russian

[1] All manuals are available for free download from http://www.who.int/roadsafety/projects/manuals/en/.

Federation, Thailand and Viet Nam. Two good examples of taking theory into practice through the use of the manuals are evident in Cambodia, and Viet Nam. In Cambodia, the National Road Safety Committee and associated key stakeholders in Cambodia have used the *Helmets* (2006) manual to guide a process for developing a helmet standard and associated legislation to enforce the wearing of the approved helmet in order to reduce the number of serious injuries and fatalities of motorcyclists. In Viet Nam, a workshop was held, with over 200 participants from Government, business and civil society to develop a country programme based on the scientific evidence offered by the *Drinking and Driving* (2007) manual. The first step in Viet Nam has been to amend the drinking and driving legislation by setting and enforcing blood alcohol concentration limits for drivers of cars and motorcycles.

15. Several partners have begun to provide technical assistance for road safety data collection and the development of data systems. In July 2009, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the United States of America hosted an international road safety data systems workshop that brought together multisectoral delegations from six low- and middle-income countries. The workshop was based on the draft good practice manual on data systems and was co-organized with WHO, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Global Road Safety Partnership.

16. The World Bank Global Road Safety Facility is supporting a diversified portfolio of capacity-building, programme delivery, infrastructure safety, research and development, advocacy and training and workshop activities and is conducting operations in over 25 countries, linking Facility-sponsored road safety management capacity reviews and infrastructure assessment programmes to country investment operations. The Facility is also supporting the development of standardized data methods for measuring road deaths and injuries through its work with the global burden of disease team and the creation of the international road policing organization, RoadPOL, a global traffic safety police network led by a law enforcement advisory panel comprising high-ranking international police professionals. The Facility signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Road Assessment Programme and is supporting country operations to develop and implement road assessment methodologies and to recommend affordable, high-return quality investments. It also has memorandums of understanding with the International Road Federation to develop and implement road traffic training modules and the International Traffic Safety Data and Analysis Group to facilitate partnerships between Group member country experts and professional peers in low- and middle-income countries.

B. Policy development

17. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety of the Economic Commission for Europe finalized and published the updated versions of the consolidated resolutions on road traffic and on road signs and signals. The resolutions contain best practices for road safety and are aimed at supplementing the conventions on road traffic and on road signs and signals, 1968, and the European agreement of 1971 supplementing them. The resolutions are reference tools providing guidelines to be implemented by countries on a voluntary basis, to improve, on the one hand, road safety, and to make possible, on the other hand, greater harmonization of regulations at the

international level. It is hoped that Governments will extensively implement the recommendations contained therein. The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations has also adopted new Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and global regulations on a number of components to improve vehicle safety and motorcycle safety worldwide.

C. Advocacy

18. Since the adoption of the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/5, the observance has spread to a growing number of countries on every continent. The Day has become an important tool in global efforts to reduce road casualties. It offers an opportunity for drawing attention to the scale of emotional and economic devastation caused by road crashes and for giving recognition to the suffering of road crash victims and the work of support and rescue services. In 2008, remembrance services and other related events were held in such countries as Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, India, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, Uganda and the United States, and almost every country in Europe. A dedicated website was also launched to make the Day more widely known and to link countries through sharing common objectives and the remembrance of people killed and injured in crashes.

19. In November 2007, WHO organized a meeting on the private sector and road safety, held at the Michelin Challenge Bibendum in Shanghai, China. The meeting convened 25 representatives from multinational private companies to: identify the private sector's "added value" and increase its involvement in road safety; share information on how private sector companies can improve safety on the road for their own employees and their contractors; discuss how private sector companies can support national and international road safety initiatives; and explore other steps that can be taken by the international community to increase awareness in road safety efforts by private companies. Follow-up meetings were held in Budapest in November 2008, hosted by Johnson & Johnson, where the Private Sector Road Safety Collaboration was formally created, and in Paris in May 2009, hosted by Michelin. The three main objectives of the network are to: improve business practices in order to enhance the safety of personnel, their families and other road users; contribute a collective private sector voice to the work of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration and other entities; and collectively support actions that would enhance global road safety generally.

20. A conference on safe road infrastructure was held at the London headquarters of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development on 4 July 2008, hosted by the organization's president, and organized by the Commission for Global Road Safety. The conference brought together representatives of the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, the European Commission and leading donor countries to discuss the harmonization of road safety procedures in road-building and road-upgrading projects, in line with the recommendations of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. A new infrastructure safety working group consisting of the major players in road infrastructure development aid was established by the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility to seek ways of harmonizing a systematic and coordinated approach to quality in assuring the safety

of road infrastructure investments across participating international financial institutions. The working group has since conducted a survey of its member infrastructure safety practices and is seeking consensus on shared good practices for future infrastructure investment operations.

21. The Commission for Global Road Safety met in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, in September 2008 at the invitation of the Government of the Russian Federation, and discussed a progress report on the work of the Commission and its "Make roads safe" campaign of 2006, noting in particular the successful adoption of its proposal for the first global ministerial meeting on road safety. The Commission also approved a new recommendation, proposing that the United Nations should agree to a decade of action for road safety in the decade leading up to 2020.

22. In December 2008, WHO and UNICEF launched the *World Report On Child Injury Prevention*. The report provides a comprehensive assessment of unintentional childhood injuries and prescribes measures to prevent them. It highlights the importance of road safety for children. The findings of the report indicate that road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among 10 to 19 year-olds, a significant cause of non-fatal injuries and a leading cause of child disability. The report concludes that if proven prevention measures, including several road safety interventions were adopted worldwide, at least 1,000 children's lives could be saved every day. The global launch was hosted by the Government of Viet Nam.

23. In February 2009, the first International Conference on Road Safety at Work was hosted in Washington, D.C. More than 200 people attended the Conference, which was organized by the United States National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and co-sponsored by WHO, the Pan American Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the National Safety Council, the United States Department of State and the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility. Breakout sessions covered a range of topics, including fleet safety policies, risk management strategies and occupational road safety in emerging markets. The Conference clearly demonstrated that road traffic injuries are an important occupational safety issue and that occupational road traffic injuries are a key component of the overall road safety problem. Several examples of how to effectively tackle the problem were given by both Governments and private companies. The Conference organizers hope to hold another international conference within two to three years and are already planning regional meetings that will address local priorities and challenges.

24. Following the World Youth Assembly in April 2007, 75 youth delegates formed a global youth network for road safety, with the goal of creating an international youth-led and youth-oriented nongovernmental organization (NGO) for road safety. Significant progress has been made in shaping the non-governmental organizations. A taskforce of young road safety advocates met in March 2009 to define the mission, objectives and possible activities of the non-governmental organizations. The non-governmental organizations will be launched in 2010 and will focus on three strategic pillars: advocacy, connecting and sharing and capacity-building. The next steps involve expanding the youth network, sorting out the organizational structures and developing a fund-raising strategy.

25. On 5 May 2009 Lord Robertson, Chairman of the Commission for Global Road Safety, launched the report entitled *Make Roads Safe: A Decade Of Action For Road Safety*. The report proposed a global target to reduce by 50 per cent the 2020

forecast of road deaths, and estimated that achieving the target would save up to 5 million lives and prevent 50 million serious injuries over the decade. To support the objective, the Commission recommended that the international community should fund a $300 million, 10-year, catalytic action plan to build national and international capacity in road injury prevention. The "Make roads safe" campaign has launched an advocacy push to build support for the proposed decade of action. Endorsements for the proposal have come from a wide range of public figures including President Arias of Costa Rica, President Arroyo of the Philippines and President Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania; former United States President Clinton; Archbishop Desmond Tutu; the President of the World Bank Robert Zoellick and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Achim Steiner. One element of the advocacy campaign is a documentary film on global road safety, entitled *Turning Point*, featuring actress and "Make roads safe" ambassador Michelle Yeoh, which was broadcast worldwide on the BBC News in May 2009 and has been widely distributed to road safety organizations and decision makers.

26. In May 2009, WHO hosted a global meeting in Brussels of non-governmental organizations advocating for road safety and road victims. Seventy organizations from 40 countries participated. The objectives of the meeting were to: foster a greater understanding of the expertise and needs of non-governmental organizations dealing with road safety and road victims; share knowledge, experiences and approaches related to advocating for road safety and road crash victims; and identify opportunities for greater collaboration among those non-governmental organizations and other organizations. Participants shared strategies for mobilizing policymakers, for communicating the message and for improving services for victims and their families and discussed the creation of a global non-governmental organization network. Participants developed a statement from the non-governmental organizations for presentation at the first global ministerial conference on road safety, to be held in November 2009.

D. Regional meetings

27. As a follow-up to the ministerial declaration on improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific (November 2006), a series of expert group meetings on improving road safety were organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in 2008 and 2009. The expert group meetings focused attention on setting regional and national road safety goals and targets that, if achieved, would lead to saving 600,000 lives by 2015. Countries in the Asia region face similar challenges in relation to road trauma, and a strong network of road safety practitioners and specialists is being built in the Asia region to address the issue. Each year, the Global Road Safety Partnership jointly organizes a road safety seminar with a host country to provide opportunities for every country in the region to share and disseminate information on the progress and outcomes of their road safety programmes and projects. In Kuala Lumpur over 230 people from the Asia region, including representatives of China and India, attended the 2008 seminar. Presentations were largely clustered around the good practices manuals. In addition to the sharing of information about interventions, the seminar also addressed general issues, key documents and initiatives that have had an impact on the region, and future regional plans.

28. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety of ECE hosted a joint meeting with the Collaboration in November 2008. The work of the Working Party is of global relevance since it is open to all the States Members of the United Nations irrespective of their geographical location, and its primary function is to serve as a guardian of the convention on road traffic (1949, Geneva) and the conventions on road traffic and on road signs and signals (1968, Vienna), which are global conventions. In addition, it administers the European Agreement that supplements the 1968 conventions, develops and promotes good road safety practices and supports the organization of road safety weeks. The Commission organized the joint meeting to facilitate information sharing and to explore possible cooperation on subjects of common interest. The Working Party and the Collaboration updated each other on various activities and discussed World Remembrance Day, the challenge of knowledge transfer from high-income to low-income and middle-income countries and strategies for the upcoming global ministerial conference on road safety.

29. In October 2008 a workshop on building the Arab Mashreq road safety partnership was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Global Road Safety Partnership and the private sector, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior in Qatar, and the participation of the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. The aim was to discuss the progress made in road safety management in member States, in addition to the establishment of an Arab Mashreq road safety partnership, its proposed objectives, structure and activities. The main outcome was the initiation of a regional road safety partnership to act as a road safety centre of excellence to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and to synchronize road safety efforts throughout the region. More specific points of action were included in "The Doha declaration", one of the outcomes of the workshop. As agreed by all the partners, the name of the partnership was changed to "Middle East and North Africa Partnership on Road Safety".

30. In February 2009, the Road Safety Forum for Ibero-America and the Caribbean was held in Madrid. The meeting was organized by the Ibero-American General Secretariat in close cooperation with the Spanish Traffic General Directorate, the World Bank through its Global Road Safety Facility, the FIA Foundation; for Automobile and Society and the MAPFRE Foundation, and was also supported by the Royal Automobile Club of Catalonia. Representatives of over 35 countries participated, mostly from the Latin America and Caribbean region. The Forum had 680 participants, including 14 ministers and deputy ministers. It facilitated progress in reaching a consensus on principles, criteria and best practices regarding road safety in the relevant countries. The main recommendations were to: implement the recommendations of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*; make road safety a key factor in transportation planning; invest at least 10 per cent of all transportation infrastructure costs in road safety; have the media take a more active role in raising awareness; encourage the countries of the region to participate in the first global ministerial conference on road safety; support the proposed decade of action for road safety; and try to ensure that the current financial crises would not have a negative impact on road safety resources.

31. A workshop on setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets in the ESCWA region was held in June 2009, organized by ESCWA, in collaboration with the United Arab Emirates National Authority for Transportation and with the active participation of the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern

Mediterranean. The workshop was part of a larger project that materialized in response to General Assembly resolution 60/5 to assist low- and middle- income countries in developing regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets and in providing examples of good road safety practices that could help them to achieve the selected targets by 2015. Participants included representatives of related sectors from more than 10 Member States, ECE, ESCAP, specialists and consultants from the European Transport Safety Council, the International Road Federation, and the Global Road Safety Partnership, alongside representatives of civil society and road safety associations. The workshop provided an opportunity to network with the United Nations, developmental partners and key stakeholders. It concluded with a set of recommendations for a regional target to reduce road crash fatalities by 30 per cent between 2008 and 2015.

32. On 7 July 2009, a conference on the theme "Make roads safe Africa" was held in Dar es Salaam, organized by the Economic Commission for Africa, the Commission for Global Road Safety and the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility. More than 300 delegates from across Africa attended. Speakers included the Vice-President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Ali Mohamed Shein, and the transport ministers of Kenya, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, all of whom strongly endorsed the proposed decade of action for road safety.

E. Data collection and research

33. In October 2008, the Joint Transport Research Centre of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Transport Forum published the report entitled *Towards Zero: Ambitious Road Safety Targets and the Safe System Approach*. The report was the result of a three-year cooperative effort by a group of safety experts representing 22 countries, as well as the World Bank, WHO and the FIA Foundation. The report takes stock of recent developments and initiatives in OECD and International Transport Forum member countries to meet increasingly ambitious road safety targets. It highlights the institutional management changes required in many countries to implement effective interventions through a strong focus on results and builds the economic case for road safety investment. The report advocates for ambitious road safety vision, setting measurable interim targets to move systematically towards the vision, and the use of a safe system approach for achieving the targets.

34. The five regional commissions are implementing a project on the theme "Improving global road safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets", funded by the United Nations Development Account. The overarching objective of the project is to assist low- and middle-income countries in developing regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets, and in providing them with examples of good road safety practices that could help them to achieve the selected targets by 2015. It is likely that the objective will be attained by the end of the project (December 2009); a number of low- and middle-income countries have already set targets. The project findings will be made available as a resource for United Nations States Members wishing to establish targets to improve road safety. Increased awareness and commitment are needed to ensure follow-up to and sustainability of the project.

35. The Road Traffic Injuries Research Network, one of the Collaboration partners supported by the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility, conducted a multi-country study on helmet standards, using the standard observational methodology proposed in the *Helmets* manual as a starting point. In addition, the Network has offered nine scholarships to up-and-coming young road safety researchers in low-income and middle-income countries to assist them in conducting research at the master's level and three scholarships to senior researchers for sabbaticals at a university or international organization where they can share their skills and learn from other road safety professionals.

F. Ministerial conference on road safety

36. Preparations are under way for the first global ministerial conference on road safety, which will be hosted by the Government of the Russian Federation in Moscow, on 19 and 20 November 2009. The ministerial conference is expected to convene as many as 1,000 participants, including ministers of health, transport, education and foreign affairs; representatives of United Nations agencies; key figures from non-governmental and civil society organizations; representatives from private companies; and other leading road safety experts. It is anticipated that participants will issue a call for a decade of action for road safety, with a commitment to halt and begin to reverse the current trend towards an increase in the number of road traffic deaths. The objectives of the ministerial conference are to draw attention to the need for action to address the large and growing global impact of road traffic crashes, in particular in low- and middle- income countries; review progress on implementation of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* and the relevant General Assembly resolutions; provide a high-level global multisectoral policy platform to share information and good practices on road safety; and propose a number of actions for the future, including a discussion of the resources needed to fulfil those actions. The national organizing committee has led preparations for the ministerial conference, with support from an international consultative committee, including development of the programme and preparation of the declaration to be adopted during the event by Member States. The members of the Collaboration are actively involved in planning and supporting the ministerial conference.

G. *Global Status Report on Road Safety*

37. In June 2009, WHO launched the *Global Status Report on Road Safety* the first global assessment drawn from a standardized survey. More than 1,000 people, including various members of the Collaboration, were involved in compiling the report, and data were received from 178 countries. The results show that road traffic injuries remain important public health, social and economic problems, particularly for low-income and middle-income countries. Pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists make up almost half of those killed on the roads, highlighting the need for those road users to be given more attention in road safety programmes. The results suggest that in many countries road safety laws need to be made more comprehensive, enforcement needs to be strengthened and data systems and linkages need to be improved. The report clearly shows that while many countries have taken steps to improve road safety, significantly more action is needed to make

the world's roads safer. The results of the report form a baseline for measuring future progress.

H. Financial support

38. The World Bank Global Road Safety Facility is financing global, regional and country road safety activities to achieve its mission and goals as set out in its strategic plan 2006-2015. It was commended by the General Assembly for establishing the first such funding mechanism, and further financial contributions were encouraged to support the initiative, which is currently funded by the World Bank Development Grant Facility, the FIA Foundation and the Governments of the Netherlands, Sweden and Australia. The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland also recently announced its intention to financially support the Facility. Effective demand for Facility grants exceeds available funding and increasing the scale of financial support to the Facility to levels commensurate with the scale of the deaths and injuries on the roads of low- and middle-income countries remains a pressing priority. A recent independent evaluation concluded that the Global Road Safety Facility is uniquely positioned to translate commitment to road safety into action for low- and middle-income countries. It urged the World Bank, the traditional bilateral donor community and concerned philanthropies to redouble their efforts to ensure that the Facility had the resources at its disposal to support the growing global, regional and country commitment to combat the global road safety crisis.

39. An important new contribution to international road safety was made during the time period covered by the present report, in the form of a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies for the development of the *Global Status Report on Road Safety* and for country projects in Mexico and Viet Nam. The Global Road Safety Initiative, funded by the private sector, focuses on implementation of the good practice manuals in target countries in Asia and Latin America and continues to support the transfer of road safety knowledge. The FIA Foundation, in addition to its support for the Global Road Safety Facility and its "Make roads safe" campaign, also continues to provide financial support to a range of programmes and advocacy activities. Several Government development agencies are also providing support for road safety activities. Other innovative funding opportunities are currently being explored.

40. Financial support for the Collaboration has been provided by the Governments of Sweden and the United States, the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility, Michelin, Johnson & Johnson and Scania.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

41. Since the previous report to the General Assembly on improving road safety, many actions have been taken at the local, national and international levels. Existing initiatives have been maintained and gained momentum, such as the private sector network for road safety and World Remembrance Day. In addition, global road safety has experienced a series of "firsts" including the first International Conference on Road Safety at Work, the first global status report on road safety, the first global project on setting road traffic casualty reduction targets, the first meeting

of road safety non-governmental organizations, and the call for a first decade of action for road safety. This is indicative of the increasing recognition by Member States and other stakeholders that action for road safety is urgent.

42. Road traffic injuries, however, continue to threaten health and development gains around the world, with devastating impacts on individuals, families, communities and society. Vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, who lack the protective shell of a car and who have been overlooked in many road safety strategies, are particularly at risk and in need of protection. Road traffic injuries are predicted to become the fifth leading cause of death globally by 2030, unless immediate action is taken. In some regions, in fact, road deaths are already the leading cause of death for the most economically productive age group between 15 and 44 years of age, and the second most important cause of death for the 5-14 year-old age group.

43. Key voices in road safety have begun to emphasize that massive increases in road deaths are not inevitable. The major risk factors for road traffic injuries are understood, as are the effective measures for addressing them. The knowledge is there — what are lacking are resources and political will. It is time for widespread implementation of a safe system approach to road safety. An ambitious road safety vision is needed globally, regionally and within countries.

44. Levels of funding for road safety are still not commensurate with the scale of the problem, and increased efforts must be made to secure additional financial support for road safety projects. In particular, road infrastructure interventions for improving road safety remain big challenges for developing countries, where the results of underinvestment are illustrated in terms of how they contrast with the very high social returns for safety interventions. The World Bank Global Road Safety Facility is an important tool for mobilizing such urgently needed support.

45. The first global ministerial conference on road safety will be an unprecedented opportunity for Member States and global road safety stakeholders to strengthen their commitment and collaboration by making action plans and identifying the next steps that will be needed to address this global crisis.

46. **It is therefore recommended that the General Assembly:**

(a) **Reaffirm its commitment to addressing the global road safety crisis;**

(b) **Call upon agencies of the United Nations system and other key partners to continue and to strengthen their cooperation in the context of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration;**

(c) **Encourage Member States to continue using the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* as a framework for road safety efforts and to continue implementing its recommendations, including adopting a systems approach to road safety;**

(d) **Call upon Member States to develop action plans and strategies in road safety, noting that the programmes should be seen to be cost-effective measures and profitable investments for Governments and other organizations to undertake, and to identify ambitious, measurable targets for those plans and strategies, with reference to the recommendations of the project on the theme "Improving global road safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets". Such plans should adopt a broad perspective on**

road traffic injury prevention that pays particular attention to the safety needs of vulnerable road users, including through improvements in public transport and road space for pedestrians and cyclists;

(e) Encourage Member States to improve their national crash data systems by establishing effective injury surveillance systems in the health sector and improved police crash data systems so that the scale and characteristics of the problem and of road users most at risk can be defined, hazardous locations can be identified and economic losses can be quantified;

(f) Encourage Member States to monitor progress in road safety, making use of the results and acting upon the recommendations of the *Global Status Report on Road Safety*, in particular in respect of protecting vulnerable road users;

(g) Encourage Member States to pay particular attention to building lead agency capacity; to addressing risk factors such as inappropriate and excessive speed, drinking and driving, the non-use of seat belts and child restraints, the non-use of helmets; to vehicle safety standards and the development of safe vehicle fleets; and to the development of safer infrastructure, including passing and enforcing comprehensive legislation, conducting necessary awareness-raising campaigns and implementing appropriate methods to monitor and evaluate existing interventions;

(h) Encourage Member States to introduce mandatory road safety audit, inspection and safety rating programmes at the key stages of the planning, design and implementation of all road infrastructures; and to develop the human capacity to carry out such activities;

(i) Invite Member States that have not yet done so to adhere to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968, and the Convention on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, and to implement them in order to contribute to strategies for improving road safety in their countries;

(j) Encourage Member States to continue strengthening intersectoral dialogue on road traffic injury prevention and to support efforts to increase intersectoral collaboration in road safety initiatives;

(k) Encourage Member States to develop sustainable mechanisms for financing their national road safety programmes;

(l) Encourage the international development and road safety communities to support road safety projects, in particular in low- and middle-income countries;

(m) Encourage development banks and funding agencies to include road safety components in their funding for road infrastructure projects and to require compulsory road safety audits, inspections and safety ratings to be undertaken at key stages in the planning and design of, all aid-funded road projects;

(n) Acknowledge the importance of the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility as a means to increase the resources needed to address road safety in low- and middle-income countries; acknowledge the important contribution of Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Global Road Safety Initiative; call for

further expansion of investment in road safety along those lines; and encourage the development of additional innovative funding mechanisms involving the private and public sectors;

(o) Encourage Member States to strengthen efforts to improve pre-hospital care systems, emergency trauma care and rehabilitation services within their countries;

(p) Call upon Member States to continue raising awareness about road safety at the international and national levels through the organization of advocacy events and by scaling up existing efforts, in particular by encouraging observation of the World Day of Remembrance of Road Traffic Victims and by inviting WHO, in collaboration with the regional commissions, to organize the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week;

(q) Encourage Member States to participate in the global ministerial conference on road safety, to be held in Moscow on 19 and 20 November 2009, and to support efforts to establish a decade of action for road safety for the 10 years leading to 2020, with a commitment to halt and begin to reverse the current trend towards an increase in the number of road traffic deaths;

(r) Request that the Secretary-General report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.